

MODEL TOBACCO FREE SCHOOL POLICY

Resource and Toolkit
2004-2005

12 GOOD REASONS FOR A TOBACCO FREE SCHOOL

1. Schools are responsible for protecting children in their charge from dangerous products. **Tobacco is a product that disables and kills.**
2. Schools must prohibit drug use in school buildings, on school grounds, and at school-sponsored events. **Tobacco is a drug.**
3. Schools must promote health rather than enable addictions. **Tobacco is addictive.**
4. Schools are responsible for providing a safe environment for students. **Smoking materials and secondhand smoke are dangerous.**
5. Schools can help “delay the onset” of smoking and significantly reduce the chances that youth will ever use tobacco regularly. **90% of people who smoke start before the age of 18.**
6. Schools must consider the other “side effects” of tobacco use. **Tobacco is a gateway drug.**
7. Schools must send clear, consistent non-use messages. **Allowing tobacco use at school conflicts with prevention messages delivered in the classroom.**
8. Schools can promote not smoking as the social norm. **Perceived social acceptance of tobacco use influences adolescent tobacco use behavior.**
9. Schools need to prepare students for the reality of smoke free workplaces and communities. **Workplaces and communities are becoming increasingly smoke free.**
10. It is important that schools model respect for state laws and community ordinances. **Laws intentionally limit access and possession of tobacco by children.**
11. School districts would be wise to protect themselves from liability risks. **Schools may face liability issues by allowing smoking on their premises.**
12. **IT IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO!**

Model Tobacco Free School Policy

PURPOSE: To promote a positive, proactive approach to tobacco control by providing a healthy working and learning environment.

INTRODUCTION:

School districts taking a comprehensive, proactive approach to tobacco control have greater adherence to their policy than those with less exacting approaches, according to a National School Board Association's survey.

Tobacco kills over 5900 South Carolina residents each year. It is the number one cause of preventable death and disability in the United States, killing more people than motor vehicle accidents, suicide, AIDS and homicides COMBINED. An astounding 36% of high school students in South Carolina smoke. Every year, 25,300 kids in this state try cigarettes for the first time, 11,100 of them get addicted to nicotine and become regular smokers. If this current trend continues, 90,000 South Carolina children alive today will ultimately die from a tobacco related disease. We must include strategies designed to prevent youth from using tobacco, to treat tobacco dependence, and to protect children and adults from exposure to tobacco. Since almost all adult tobacco users began use before age 18, childhood and adolescence are critical times for prevention.

A tobacco free school environment is essential to achieving physical, mental and social health goals for students, staff, the school and the district. Aside from deterring individual use, comprehensive policies benefit everyone by reducing exposure to secondhand smoke. Even economic benefits can be realized (e.g., decreased risk for fires or damage of school property, and easier upkeep and maintenance of school facilities and grounds).

Clearly articulated school policies, applied fairly and consistently, help students decide not to use tobacco. Most effective in reducing tobacco use in students are policies that prohibit tobacco use on school property, that require prevention education, and that provide access to cessation programs and other positive alternatives rather than solely instituting punitive measures.

Model Tobacco Free School Policy

COMPONENTS OF A COMPREHENSIVE POLICY:

A comprehensive policy will prohibit all tobacco use (including smokeless tobacco) on all school property and at all school sponsored events and functions on and off campus, by all people (including students, employees, visitors, contractors, delivery drivers, etc) .

Federal law (Pro-Children Act of 1994, 20 USC 6082) says that smoking is prohibited by anyone – youth or adult – inside any facilities serving children, but does not regulate smoking outside the building. **Only by adopting a local policy can a district ensure that all protections offered by a comprehensive tobacco policy are covered.**

The specific elements of a comprehensive policy include:

Rationale: Policies should contain a clear statement describing the need for a comprehensive “no tobacco use” policy. This may include health hazards, secondhand smoke, risk factors, gateway drug issues, fire and safety problems, role modeling, etc.

Content: Policies should specifically address adults as well as youth, all forms of tobacco, and should apply to off-campus school-sponsored events as well as school grounds, buildings and vehicle.

Secondhand smoke: Policies should emphasize support for smoke free environments for the health benefits of a smoke free work and learning environment.

Prevention education: Policies should include effective tobacco prevention education as an essential component of a strong K-12 program.

Advertising and sponsorship prohibition: Policies should have language prohibiting tobacco advertising on school property, at school functions and in school publications. This may include gear, paraphernalia, clothing, etc. Policies should also include language prohibiting school acceptance of gifts or funds from the tobacco industry.

Model Tobacco Free School Policy

COMPONENTS OF A COMPREHENSIVE POLICY:

Cessation Support: Cessation referral or support should be included as a resource. This support should be clearly specified for whom it is intended, ie. staff, students, students, family members.

Communication: Policies should be clearly communicated to all relevant audiences including students, staff, parents and visitors.

Enforcement: Policies should offer alternatives to suspension for students violating the policy. This may and should include mandatory tobacco education, fines or litter duty.

Procedures: Should be consistent with policy and should promote equitable enforcement. Procedures should have a timeline for review and revision and should identify who is responsible for organizing the implementation, enforcement, and periodic revision of the policy.

Model Tobacco Free School Policy

Comprehensive Policy Elements

RATIONALE:

It is the district's obligation to protect the health, welfare and safety of students, staff and visitors. In light of scientific evidence that the use of tobacco products has a direct link to numerous health problems and to be consistent with district curriculum and South Carolina law, Newberry County School District will establish a tobacco free environment for district property (grounds and vehicles) and all school-sponsored events. This policy is further intended to protect students, school personnel, and visitors from being exposed to second hand smoke.

CONTENT:

For the purpose of this policy, "tobacco" is defined to include any cigarette, cigar or other smoking tobacco and smokeless tobacco, dip, chew or snuff in any form.

Clothing, bags, hats, and other personal items used by staff and students to display, promote, or advertise tobacco products are prohibited on district grounds, at school-sponsored activities or in district vehicles. Tobacco advertising is prohibited in all school-sponsored publications and at all school-sponsored events. District acceptance of gifts or funds from the tobacco industry is similarly prohibited.

The use, distribution, or possession of tobacco products in school buildings, on school grounds, in school-leased or owned vehicles, and all school affiliated functions on or off campus is prohibited. The policy applies to students, staff, and visitors.

SECONDHAND SMOKE:

In addition to providing a healthy learning environment, the district is equally committed to providing a health working environment. This policy will ensure a smoke free workplace.

PREVENTION EDUCATION:

Preventing youth from beginning any tobacco use starts with creating and maintaining a tobacco free atmosphere throughout the school system and continues with classroom education. As a part of the district's tobacco use prevention activities, the superintendent shall ensure that tobacco use instructional programs, as recommended by the

Model Tobacco Free School Policy

Comprehensive Policy Elements

South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, Tobacco Control Division and the South Carolina Department of Education, are an integral part of its drug and alcohol prevention curriculum. Programs must be integrated within the health education program and age and developmentally appropriate instruction provided at every level, kindergarten through age 12, with particular emphasis on grades six through eight.

Staff responsible for teaching tobacco use prevention will be encouraged to collaborate with agencies and groups that conduct tobacco use prevention education and to participate in ongoing professional development activities that provide basic knowledge about the effects of tobacco use, effective instructional techniques and program-specific activities.

ADVERTISING AND SPONSORSHIP PROHIBITION:

The district will not accept donations of gifts, money or materials from the tobacco industry. This district will not participate in any type of services that are funded by the tobacco industry.

CESSATION SUPPORT:

Tobacco free policies should be accompanied by assurances that cessation support will be addressed in the implementation plans. In recognition of the effect this policy may have on employees and students who currently use tobacco products, the district will offer tobacco use cessation services to students and staff who wish to quit tobacco use. Cessation services will be provided separately for students and staff. The district will promote cessation resources and positive alternatives to discipline

COMMUNICATION:

To enhance the effectiveness of implementation and enforcement of your new tobacco policy, it must be communicated to all members of the school and community before it is implemented, as well as on an ongoing basis.

Model Tobacco Free School Policy

Comprehensive Policy Elements

Suggested communication for students:

- Post prominently placed tobacco free school signs at all entrances, school grounds, parking lots, athletic facilities, and in vehicles
- Place details in student handbooks
- Announce at student orientation meetings
- Utilize student organizations, activities and newspapers
- Make announcements at morning broadcasts and over loud speaker systems at sporting and other events
- Utilize art students to design posters, banners, and signs
- Provide students with information regarding cessation resources

Suggested communication for employees:

- Post prominently placed tobacco free school signs at all entrances, school grounds, parking lots, athletic facilities, and in vehicles
- Provide every school district employee with a copy of the policy
- Announce and discuss policy at staff meetings
- Post information in staff lounges and offices
- Promote cessation services and provide information
- Inform potential employees of policy in all job interviews

Suggested communication for parents/guardians:

- Post prominently placed tobacco free school signs at all entrances, school grounds, parking lots, athletic facilities, and in vehicles
- Send a letter to each parent/guardian explaining policy change, give reasons for change and ask for support
- Ask parents to sign student-school contracts
- Announce policy at PTA/PTO, school improvement council and/or similar meetings
- Include an article outlining the policy and implications of the policy in school newsletters, school and community paper

Model Tobacco Free School Policy

Comprehensive Policy Elements

Suggested communication for public/community

- Post prominently placed tobacco free school signs at all entrances, school grounds, parking lots, athletic facilities, and in vehicles. Other places may include gathering places, restrooms, loading areas and stairwells
- Remove all ashtrays from school property, especially those outside entrances to school buildings
- Announce policy at all athletic events, meetings, concerts, and plays. Have students develop and/or deliver messages
- Train students, staff and community volunteers to politely ask community members to respect school policy. Avoid confrontational communication
- Ask students, staff and community volunteers to assist in distributing informational flyers at school events
- Communicate policy to parent and business volunteers who are assisting in supervising youth during off-campus activities, including field trips, job shadowing, or community service
- Inform vendors about the policy
- Do not make exceptions for important visitors

ENFORCEMENT

A detailed comprehensive enforcement plan will allow for easier acceptance of the policy. School tobacco policies should emphasize support rather than punishment. Policies that are implemented and enforced consistently for all individuals are most effective.

The policy should described how it will be enforced (such as hall monitors issuing citations to students, police officers patrolling athletic fields at games and teachers supervising cafeterias or other areas where students gather, etc.)

Compliance monitoring and enforcement of tobacco use policy are most frequently designated as the responsibility of school administrators, although a teacher, the school nurse, Drug Free Schools safety officer, resource officer, or other appropriate individuals can be assigned this duty. Determined personnel should meet periodically with the district superintendent, school board, or designated district administrator to provide updates as to the progress of their school's tobacco policy enforcement.

Model Tobacco Free School Policy

Comprehensive Policy Elements

It is important to remember that tobacco use is, in most cases, an addictive disease, not merely a discipline problem. The addicted student will most likely be the repeat offender. Offering a voluntary in-school cessation program can assist students in quitting.

POLICY VIOLATIONS

Having a strong policy and involving a violator in some activity that promotes greater understanding of the harmful effects of tobacco use is always better than a simple fine or suspension.

Maintain a strong tobacco free atmosphere at all times in school buildings and on school grounds. Typically, there are fewer violations when a tobacco free environment is the norm. Consider working with school neighbors to extend a tobacco free zone off campus. Students will be less likely to try to sneak a smoke or chew between classes or to step off the school grounds and immediately begin using.

Emphasize “respect for others” in enforcing tobacco use policies. With this approach students can better understand that they are violating the rights of others to clean air when they smoke in restrooms or in breezeways between buildings. Similarly, students are not respectful of school property if they spit tobacco juice on walkways, in corners or in drinking faucets.

STUDENTS

Suspension rarely helps the student’s addiction. Ideally, suspension would only be used as a last resort or refused to participate in other outlined measures. If suspension is deemed absolutely necessary, alternative forms of suspension, such as in-school suspension or suspension from extracurricular activities are preferable to out-of school suspension. Suspension should always be accompanied by counseling and a re-entry conference should be held prior to the student’s return to school with the student, parent/guardian and administrator.

Model Tobacco Free School Policy

Comprehensive Policy Elements

It is strongly recommended that all student violators attend a tobacco education program that discusses the addiction process and cessation options. This should not be confused with cessation programs. It is not recommended to require student violators to attend mandatory cessation programs.

STAFF

Staff violations should be considered, after the first offense, as insubordination and subject to disciplinary action. Staff must be expected to adhere to the policy stipulations as outlined. It is strongly recommended that all staff violators attend a tobacco education program.

PARENTS, COMMUNITY MEMBERS, VISITORS

Communication with the public should always be focused on the positive message to enforce the policy. Public sanctions should involve the following: (a) request the individual to stop and refer to school policy; (b) if person refuses to stop, request individual to leave site and refer to policy; (c) if person refuses to leave or is a repeat violator, refer to local authorities and person is subject to fine.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS

Develop a sense of pride, high standards and expectations of students and staff. Adherence of the district's tobacco free should be an expectation of admission.

CONCLUSION

Having a tobacco free school environment is critical in achieving physical, mental and social health goals for students, staff, the school and the district.

Comprehensive policies must include strategies designed to prevent youth from using tobacco, to treat tobacco dependence and to protect children and adults alike from exposure to tobacco. Remember, an effective, enforceable policy will be a clearly communicated policy which is applied fairly, equitably and consistently.

Tobacco Free School Policy

Model Procedures and Regulations for Tobacco Free Schools in South Carolina

Purpose Statement

According to the US Surgeon General's report of 1986, the Environmental Protection Agency of 1992, the South Carolina Clean Indoor Air Act of 1990, and the Federal Pro-Children Act of 1994, tobacco use and exposure to second hand smoke (SHS) are hazardous to the health of human beings. The board of education reaffirms that one of the best methods of instruction is appropriate role modeling provided in context of a healthy educational environment. The board will enact a tobacco-free policy for Newberry County School District to protect the health of all individuals associated with the school district.

It is the responsibility and desire of the board to:

- provide a tobacco free learning environment for the students of Newberry County;
- set positive examples of healthy behavior for those students and entire community; and
- provide a tobacco free workplace for the employees of Newberry County School District.

Administrative Rules

The district strictly prohibits:

- the use and/or possession of all tobacco products or paraphernalia including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, pipes, smokeless tobacco and snuff; and
- the use of the abovementioned within all district-owned or leased facilities and property including but not limited to all buildings, vehicles, offices, lounges, restrooms, lunchrooms, stairways, hallways, community areas, gymnasiums, locker rooms and practice/playing fields.

This policy applies to:

- all employees of the school district (administrators, faculty and staff), students and visitors

This policy will be in effect:

- 90 days after the announcement of its adoption date, _____, to allow a smooth transition to a tobacco free educational environment; and
- from that point on 24 hours per day, 365 days per year.

Employees will not use tobacco products:

- in the presence of students during school time, while on administrative duty or at any time or place while students are present under their jurisdiction (e.g., coaching athletic teams), including activities that take place either on or off school grounds (e.g. chaperoning field trips).

Education and Assistance

It is the responsibility of the board to provide a health learning environment for the students of Newberry County and to model healthy behaviors to those students and the entire community. Educational programs, materials and referral networks will therefore be offered to students, district employees and parents regarding the hazards, prevention, and elimination of tobacco use.

Model Tobacco Free School Policy

Model Procedures and Regulations for Tobacco Free Schools in South Carolina

Purpose

The purpose of these procedures and regulations is:

- to eliminate the use of all tobacco products by employees (administrators, faculty, and staff), students and visitors of Newberry County School District while in or on school district property (leased or owned) or at district sanctioned events; and
- to provide professional educational programs and material to students, district employees and visitors regarding the hazards, prevention, and elimination of tobacco use.

These conditions will be effective _____.

Enforcement

Copies of the tobacco-free school policy will be distributed to all district employees, students, and parents at the implementation of the new policy, the beginning of each academic year and to mid-term entrants.

This policy will be published annually in student and employee handbooks.

Signs prohibiting tobacco use will be conspicuously placed at the entrances to all building, inside designated areas, such as restrooms and gymnasiums, around school grounds, such as playing fields and parking lots, and inside vehicles and buses.

Disciplinary Actions

The success of a tobacco-free school policy will depend upon the thoughtfulness, consideration, and cooperative of smokers and nonsmokers. Any problems should be brought to the attention of the appropriate supervisor and handled through the normal chain of command. Those who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary actions. Enrollment in a tobacco education will be considered as one disciplinary measure for students and employees failing to comply with the tobacco-free policy. Repeated violations will result in more punitive actions.

Employees

An employee who violates this policy will be subject to:

First offense – A verbal reprimand to the employee and written notification placed in the employee's personnel file and mandatory enrollment in a tobacco education program and/or voluntary enrollment in a cessation program.

Second offense – A one day suspension without pay. Cessations resources will be provided.

Third offense – A recommendation to the board for further disciplinary action.

Model Tobacco Free School Policy

Model Procedures and Regulations for Tobacco Free Schools in South Carolina

Students

A student who violates this policy will be disciplined under the uniform discipline code for Newberry County School District:

First offense – Parent/administrator conference and enrollment in a tobacco education program that discourages tobacco use. Failure to attend will result in \$25 fine and one Saturday detention.

Second offense - \$25 fine and one Saturday detention.

Third offense - \$50 fine and one day in-school suspension with suspension from extra curricular activities

Fourth offense - \$50 fine, three days out of school suspension, suspension from extracurricular activities and recommendation for further disciplinary actions.

General Public

- a member of the general public (visitor) who fails to comply with this policy will:
- be asked to leave school property;
- forfeit any fee charged for admission; and
- be prosecuted for disorderly conduct after repeated offenses